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Route To:

Subject:Release of the Roadless Area Conservation Final Rule

To: All Employees

President Clinton announced, and Secretary Glickman has signed, the Roadless Area Conservation Final Rule. In addition, the new roads policy was finalized yesterday after more than two years of work. Both of these rules have required countless hours of dedicated work on the part of Forest Service employees throughout the country. Both of these rules were shaped by the involvement of literally millions of people. I want to personally thank everyone who has contributed their time, passion, and energy to their completion.

Details and specific information about the roadless rulemaking is available at www.roadless.fs.fed.us. Over the past decade or longer, the Forest Service has made the transition from emphasizing resource development and production to focussing on conservation, stewardship and restoration. The roads rule's emphasis away from new road construction toward managing a transportation system, providing safe access through improved maintenance of the existing roads system is emblematic, of that shift.

Similarly, completion of the roadless rule signifies the shift away from the timber controversies of the past over roadless entry and old growth harvest. This year we received a budget increase of over 40% and plan to hire as many as 5,000 part-time and full-time employees. I believe the agency has never been better positioned to make the case to the American people that we can both protect the most pristine and rare of wildlands while employing active forest management to protect communities, habitat, and municipal watersheds from fire and insects and disease.

This is a proud day for the Forest Service. Thanks for all that you do.

/s/ Mike Dombeck

MIKE DOMBECK

Chief